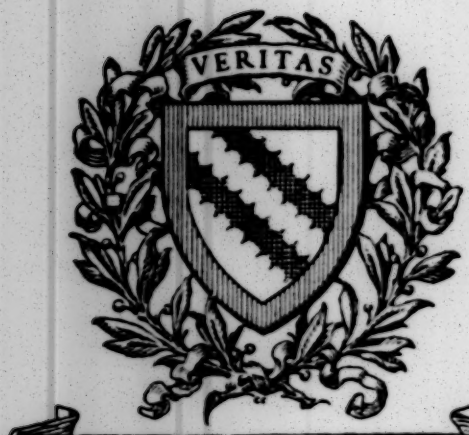

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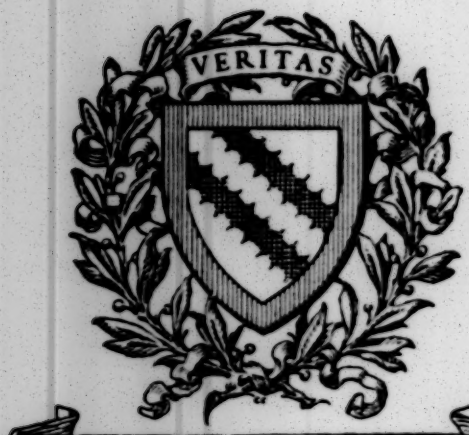

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HANDBOOK OF STANDARDS

FOR THE

Woman's Land Army of America

April, 1919

Issued by
The National Board of the W. L. A. A.
with the Endorsement of the
United States Employment Service
Department of Labor

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March, 1919.

Foreword.

During the year 1918 the great food shortage incited patriotic farmers to attempt to keep up and if possible to increase their normal production. To aid the farmer in this endeavor and to relieve the farm labor shortage, the Woman's Land Army of America was organized, and instituted the unit system of supplying women helpers to the farmer without burdening the farm household with the feeding or housing of these workers. There were approximately 15,000 women placed by the Woman's Land Army during the last season, in units and various emergency groups.

In recognition of this work, the Secretary of Labor signed an agreement on December 18th, under which a Division was created in the United States Employment Service, to be known as the Woman's Land Army. This Federal department was formed for the purpose of co-ordinating the activities of the Woman's Land Army through a Federal clearing house, and of controlling the placement of women on the land in accordance with the need of localities and in conformity with standards which will safeguard the well-being of women workers. The Federal office works in close co-opera-

tion with the National organization of the Woman's Land Army.

This year the U. S. Employment Service advises us that in spite of the piling up of unemployment in the cities, and in spite of every effort to induce these unemployed to go onto the farms, there will still be a serious shortage of farm labor, as there has always been in years previous to the war, and the Woman's Land Army is asked to prepare to help meet this shortage. We are therefore perfecting plans for the training of both unit Supervisors and Land Army workers. We have surveyed the records of last year's efforts and have prepared this Handbook to provide for a better solution of certain problems that were met last year with emergency haste.

The necessity for establishing standards in Land Army policies which affect the welfare of our women workers and the efficiency of our national organization has come to our attention during the past season. As we pass through the present transition period from war time to peace, our Land Army program changes with the changed conditions, and we foresee, in the permanent opening of the industry of agriculture to women, the possibility of unwise precedents being quite unintentionally established unless clear-cut standards are defined and their practice urged by us at the outset.

To this end we have sought the advice of men and women experts in the fields of physical and social welfare and industrial employment, and have compiled in this Handbook the results of their professional survey of our problems. We present these to you in the form of recommendations, and appeal for your co-operation in maintaining these standards in the interests of the women to whom the Land Army is opening new opportunities. These standards are commended to you by the National Board of the Woman's Land Army of America, with the endorsement of the United States Employment Service of the Department of Labor.

STANDARDS RECOMMENDED.

Placements.

Land Army workers may be placed in Community Units, Single Farm Units, or as individuals.

1. Community Units

A group of women living together under the direction of a Land Army Supervisor and supplying emergency labor to the local farmers constitutes a Community Unit. These units are organized in accordance with prescribed regulations, which provide for the well-being of the workers. Such regulations should be drawn up by each State Division to meet the local conditions and in accordance with the general policies of the Land Army as outlined in this Handbook.

An examination of the unit records for 1918 shows that units under ten in number are difficult to maintain with economic independence, and that units of over fifty in number (except those which are placed to serve special enterprises, such as large commercial orchards) are not to be recommended because of the expense of transporting the workers long distances. We would suggest that units of from twenty-five to thirty members have usually proved most satisfactory. It has been found practical, however, to establish a large central camp, using it partially as a training farm, from which branch units of from five to fifteen members may be sent out to meet emergency needs through the county.

It is suggested that each State Division of the Woman's Land Army of America arrange for an agreement between the farmer and the Supervisor of the unit supplying workers. The terms of such an agreement should be specified by the State Division, and we recommend that the subjects covered in this book of standards be incorporated into the agreement, and that wherever possible the farmer be asked to guarantee employment of the workers on a weekly rather than a daily basis.

2. *Single Farm Unit*

A group of women living together under the direction of a Land Army Supervisor, employed for a given period by one farmer and housed on his farm, is termed a Single Farm Unit.

It is suggested that an agreement covering the same subject matter as that recommended for the Community Unit should be in force between the Supervisor of the Single Farm Unit and the employing farmer.

The Supervisor of the Single Farm Unit should be in control of the household expenditures of the unit.

3 *Individual Placements*

No women should be placed singly on farms unless their welfare can be satisfactorily safeguarded, and unless there is a woman in the farmer's household. Before making such placements, the local County Chairman of the Land Army should thoroughly investigate the status of the farmer, and should secure the worker by an agreement similar to the following:

Agreement.

It is agreed by the parties hereto,

1. That ---------- of ----------
---------- shall employ ---------- for
a period of ---------- weeks, from ----------1919,
and shall pay her therefor wages at the rate of----------

2. That the hours of labor required of said----------
---------- shall not exceed---------- per week,
with one full hour for lunch.

3. That said---------- shall provide for
said---------- suitable sleeping room and
food, and proper toilet facilities.

4. That the duties required of said----------
shall be as follows:

5. That representatives of the Woman's Land Army shall have the right, from time to time, to inspect the premises, working, living and other conditions affecting or attending the performance of this agreement.

6. That no right of action against any representative of the said Woman's Land Army or any State Comittee of the same, shall accrue to said_____by reason of any advice given by such representative or Committee with respect to the subject matter of this agreement.

7. That said_____shall on her part faithfully and to the best of her ability perform such duties as shall, subject to the terms of this agreement, be required of her by said_____.

(Date and Signatures.)

(State Divisions should print on the back of this agreement general requirements as to food, sanitation, etc.)

The local Committee should further be responsible for the above inspection at intervals, as stipulated by the State Division. Without such inspection and investigation, no individual worker may be known as a Land Army worker or wear the insignia.

Hours.

When day labor is furnished by Community Units, the Land Army standard is the 8 hour day. In the case of a Single Farm Unit, or individual placements, the extension of the day should only be permitted when the work is diversified. The 10 hour day should not be allowed except when the work is varied and intermittent, and the spread of time should in no instance exceed 12 hours. The term spread denotes the time between the beginning and the end of work.

An hour should be allowed for the noon-day meal, at a specified time.

Wages.

We recommend that the full wage be paid to the worker, without deductions, and that when housed in Single Farm or

Community Units she pay for her board and lodging according to price agreed upon. This recommendation is made after careful study of the records both of camps run according to the above plan, and those in which the worker was paid a flat rate by the month after deducting her living expenses from the wage received. The method of payment recommended ensures a sounder business basis, and places the worker in a more intelligent and responsible relationship to the unit.

When payment is computed on piece work, a minimum daily wage should be insisted upon, and a definite statement to this effect incorporated in the agreement with the employer.

Workers should be divided into two classes, the inexperienced or untrained and the experienced or trained. Workers having had sufficient experience to familiarize them with farm operations, or who have had the Land Army training courses, should receive the same wages as that of men when they do the same kind of work. Entirely inexperienced or untrained workers may receive a lower wage.

Kinds of Work.

Women have proved their special fitness for certain kinds of farm work. In many instances they have been more satisfactory than men. In fruit picking and packing, and in truck garden work, their steadiness and carefulness make them superior helpers.

For this reason we recommend that in entering the industry of agriculture, women specialize in the lines of work for which they are fitted.

This does not preclude women from engaging in general farm work where their strength is equal to it, but the average woman will probably find certain farm operations too heavy for her muscular ability, and should not run the risk of overstrain.

It may be found necessary in the states to make a definite ruling limiting the kinds of work suitable for women and discriminating against plowing, the repeated lifting and carrying of weights exceeding 50 pounds, etc.

Entrance Requirements.

1. Age Limit

No workers under eighteen years of age shall be accepted for Land Army service in Community or single Farm Units. In the matter of individual placements, we recommend that no woman be placed by the Woman's Land Army under the age of twenty-one, or preferably twenty-five years.

2. Physical Examination

After careful investigation and consultation with noted physicians, the Land Army has prepared a physical examination card which it recommends for acceptance to State Divisions. (See page 12).

It is further recommended that reliable physicians be retained by each State Division in all large recruiting centers for the purpose of making this examination with proper care. No examinations should be valid unless given within two weeks of assignment to work.

It is also recommended that a record of the worker's health be kept during her service under Land Army supervision, and that a final examination be made at the expiration of her term of service.

Health Regulations.

It is recommended that utmost care should be taken by local Committees and Supervisors to safeguard the Land Army workers through attention to general health conditions such as:

(a) Sanitation.

(b) Dietetics.

First Aid equipment should be provided in every unit.

A Sanitation

Too great care cannot be given to the following features of camp life:

(1) Drainage.

(2) Disposal of waste.

(3) Incineration of refuse.

(4) Toilet accommodations.

(5) Bathing facilities.

(6) Adequate window screening.

(7) General camp cleanliness.

These matters have been taken up in detail in the report of the Wellesley College Training Camp, and recommendations regarding them may be found in the Appendix of said report.

In a Community Unit, the Supervisor should see that drinking water and proper toilet facilities are accessible on farms where members of the camp are working.

B Dietetics

One of the most serious problems with which the Land Army camps had to deal in 1918 was the matter of furnishing proper and satisfying food to the farm workers.

A preliminary consideration of this subject will be found in the report of the Wellesley College Training Camp, together with menus and recipes.

Uniforms.

Women should not attempt to do farm work hampered by skirts or by clothing which constricts the muscles. A uniform carefully designed to meet the needs of the woman landworker has been adopted by the National Board of the Woman's Land Army and can be supplied on application.

Three-quarter or full height shoes of stout leather with low heels are essential for farm workers.

Camp Organization.

A detailed handbook on Camp Organization, including such subjects as Camp Management, transportation, recreation, camp rations, etc., is now in preparation and may be had on application.

Further Recommendations.

1. State Laws

It is suggested that every State Division should familiarize itself with the statutes of the State Board of Health, and with all state regulations covering fire protection, workers' insurance, employers' liability, camps, etc., and that all local chairmen, field secretaries and supervisors be instructed in these matters.

2. Slack Season

Local Committees responsible for the placing of units should make a careful study of the **normal** slack season in the locality, and regulate the enrollment of workers in accordance with the varying demand.

If this precaution is taken to guard against protracted periods of unemployment, the emergency slack times occasioned by weather conditions will not cause too serious a financial loss to the worker. She will further be protected against such occasional loss on rainy days, etc., if an agreement providing for employment by the week or month instead of on a daily basis has been entered into with the farmers.

3. House Duty

For camp efficiency we recommend that women recruited for farm work should not be detailed for the performance of house duty except for the care of their own rooms and for some light housework, thus leaving them free for the work for which they have enrolled. It has been found practicable in camps where workers receive their wage direct and pay for their board, to engage special house workers for a suitable wage, to prepare the meals, wash dishes, and do all necessary cleaning. The wages of such house workers may be met from the amount paid for board, when the farm workers are receiving a proper wage and steady employment.

Woman's Land Army of America Medical Examination.

Serial No._____

Name ..... Age .....

Address .....

Heart ..... Lungs .....

Nose ..... Throat .....

Skin ..... Back .....

Eyes ..... Feet .....

Height ..... Weight .....

Nervous System .....

Abdominal Operations .....

Menstrual History .....

Bowels ..... Digestion .....

Sensitiveness to Sun .....

Have you ever been inoculated for

Typhoid? ..... When .....

Smallpox? ..... When .....

If not, are you willing to be inoculated?

Date .....

I have today examined .....

and pronounce her ABLE / UNABLE to do eight hours of farm work without injury to her health. I place her in Class..... (A—unusually strong absolutely sound, able to do the heaviest work; B—of average strength with no serious defects; C—less than average strength, or with some defect noted below which must be guarded against; D—poor physique, or with defects noted below that may interfere with her usefulness.)

_____

SIGNATURE

_____

ADDRESS